The winner takes it all? Characteristics of adolescent at-risk/problem gamblers in Switzerland

# Details

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## Topics

Risks and harms

## Sample

3134 students from post-mandatory education of the Canton of Bern, Switzerland

## Implications For Parents About

Parenting guidance / support

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

Background: Gambling has and still entertains people in almost all societies throughout the world. Western societies have faced considerable changes in the amount and accessibility of gambling possibilities during the last decades, and the rates of both adolescent gamblers and problem gamblers have increased significantly.
Objective: To determine the characteristics of at-risk and problem adolescent gamblers in Switzerland.
Subjects: The study population consisted of 3134 students (1669 females) attending post-mandatory education in 15 randomly chosen centres. Participants were divided into
non- (n = 2207), non-problematic (n = 754) and at-risk/ problematic gamblers (n = 176).
Methods: Both gambling groups were compared to nongamblers on socio-demographic measures, substance use and Internet use. Overall, 29.6% had gambled during the
past year and 5.6% had gambled in a risky or problematic way. Compared to non-gamblers and after controlling for potential confounders, non-problem gamblers were significantly more likely to be male, apprentices and to misuse alcohol. At-risk/problematic gamblers were additionally more likely to smoke cannabis, to be problematic Internet users and to be non-Swiss than non-gamblers.
Conclusion: At-risk and problematic adolescent gambling is associated with other health risk behaviours. Health practitioners should include gambling in the psycho-social screening and preventive counselling of adolescents.

# Outcome

Overall, 29.6% had gambled during the past year and 5.6% had gambled in a risky or problematic way..Non-problem gamblers were significantly more likely to be male, apprentices and to misuse alcohol. At-risk/problematic gamblers were additionally more likely to smoke cannabis, to be problematic Internet users and to be non-Swiss than non-gamblers.
"Summing up, our findings speak in favour of recognising gambling as part of a larger problem behaviour and including it into the psychosocial screening and preventive counselling ofadolescents" (Lehmann et al., 2017 p. 5)